

Message Text

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ACTION AF-06

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FM AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5177

INFO AMCONSUL ASMARA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

AMEMBASSY PARIS

USCINCEUR

C O N F I D E N T I A L ADDIS ABABA 7832

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR MASS ET US

SUBJECT: ASSISTANT SECRETARY DAVIS' MEETING WITH PMAC SECOND
VICE CHAIRMAN

1. ASSISTANT SECRETARY DAVIS WAS RECEIVED FOR FAREWELL CALL BY
PMAC SECOND VICE CHAIRMAN LTC ATNAFU LATE AFTERNOON JUNE 30.
PMAC MEMBER CAPT. SISAYE, FOREIGN MINISTER KIFLE AND MOFA
AMERICAN AFFAIRS DIRECTOR HAMID WERE PRESENT, AND ALSO
AMBASSADOR HUMMEL AND DCM WYMAN. AT OUTSET ATNAFU EXPRESSED
REGRET THAT PMAC CHAIRMAN TEFERI BANTE IS CURRENTLY TOURING
DISTANT PROVINCES AND THAT FIRST VICE CHAIRMAN MAJOR MENGHISTU WAS
AT THE MOMENT CHAIRING AN EMERGENCY SESSION OF THE COUNCIL.

2. ATNAFU BEGIN WITH WORDS OF WELCOME, GRATITUDE FOR PAST US
ASSISTANCE, AND HOPE THAT SUCH ASSISTANCE WILL INCREASE IN THE
FUTURE, PERMITTING COOPERATION ALONG MUTUALLY BENEFICIAL LINES.
HE THEN DESCRIBED THE EPMG'S FEARS OF AN EARLY ATTACK BY SOMALIA
AND EMPHASIZED THE OVERWHELMING IMPORTANCE OF VERY EARLY DELIVERY
OF F5AS. HE ALSO STRESSED THE URGENT NATURE OF ADDITIONAL WAR
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RESERVE AMMUNITION, SINCE QUOTE OUR RESERVE IS BELOW THAT REQUIRED

FOR THE EMERGENCY UNQUOTE. HE HOPED THIS REQUEST WOULD LEAD TO AN IMMEDIATE DECISION AND HE SAID THAT THERE ARE OTHER ITEMS WHICH REQUIRE EARLY DECISIONS SUCH AS THE TOW MISSILES AND ARMORED PERSONNEL

CARRIERS. ATNAFU SPOKE OF THE IMPORTANCE OF F5ES FOR THE EPMG'S INTERMEDIATE AND LONG-RANGE PLANS, BUT SAID IT WAS DIFFICULT FOR HIS GOVERNMENT TO DECIDE ON THEIR ACQUISITION UNTIL ITS IMMEDIATE AIRCRAFT NEEDS HAD BEEN MET. HE HOPED THAT SECRETARY DAVIS WOULD USE HIS PERSONAL INFLUENCE IN WASHINGTON TO EXPEDITE URGENTLY NEEDED DECISIONS ON SUCH MATTERS.

3. SECRETARY DAVIS ASSURED ATNAFU THAT HE WOULD COUNT UPON HIS PERSONAL SYMPATHY AND COOPERATION IN CONNECTION WITH DELIVERIES OF MILITARY EQUIPMENT TO ETHIOPIA. HE HAD LISTENED WITH GREAT INTEREST TO THE FOREIGN MINISTER'S EXPLANATIONS THE DAY BEFORE OF HIS GOVERNMENT'S POLICIES AND HAD BEEN STRUCK BY THE SIMILARITY BETWEEN ITS CONCERNS AND THOSE OF THE U.S. ADMINISTRATION AND CONGRESS FOR DEVELOPING COUNTRIES. HE WISHED TO EMPHASIZE THAT THE USG IS IN NO WAY UNHAPPY WITH THE EFFORTS OF THE EPMG TO IMPROVE THE WELFARE OF THE ETHIOPIAN PEOPLE. NATIONALIZATION WAS A MATTER FOR DECISION BY THE EPMG AND THE USG ASKED ONLY FOR COMPENSATION IN ACCORDANCE WITH INTERNATIONAL LAW. NOTING THAT THE PRESENT LEVELS OF ECONOMIC AND MILITARY ASSISTANCE TO ETHIOPIA ARE UNPRECEDENTED, SECRETARY DAVIS STRESSED THAT THE USG HAS NO OBJECTION TO SOCIAL REFORMS BEING CONDUCTED IN ETHIOPIA. THE USG LOOKS FORWARD TO BEING HELPFUL TO THE EPMG, HOPING TO DEMONSTRATE IN ACTIONS AS WELL AS WORDS ITS DESIRE TO BE A TRUE FRIEND.

4. SECRETARY DAVIS SAID THAT HE DOES HAVE ONE CONCERN AT PRESENT, NAMELY THAT THE ATTITUDE OF THE ETHIOPIAN MEDIA TOWARDS THE US HAS PRODUCED REACTIONS WHICH COULD MAKE IT MORE DIFFICULT FOR THE USG TO BE HELPFUL. THE EPMG HAS NOT DONE ALL IT COULD TO MAKE CLEAR THE NATURE OF US-ETHIOPIAN RELATIONS. IF THE PUBLIC ATMOSPHERE IN ETHIOPIA IS INCONSISTENT WITH THE NATURE OF THESE RELATIONS, CONGRESSMEN, SENATORS, AND THE PRESS WILL RAISE QUESTIONS WHICH OVER A PERIOD OF TIME CAN COMPLICATE THE USG'S DESIRE TO BE OF ASSISTANCE. AN UNSATISFACTORY ATMOSPHERE IN ETHIOPIA WHICH IS REFLECTED, FOR EXAMPLE, IN THE ATTITUDE OF SCHOOL CHILDREN AND OF THOSE WITH WHOM PEACE CORPS VOLUNTEERS AND

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OTHER AMERICANS LIVE COULD ALSO MAKE IT MORE DIFFICULT FOR THEM TO CONTINUE THEIR WORK, AND INDEED SOME PEACE CORPS VOLUNTEERS HAVE RECENTLY WONDERED IF THEIR EFFORTS ARE STILL APPROPRIATE.

5. HOWEVER, CONTINUED SECRETARY DAVIS, US WILLINGNESS TO BE HELPFUL IS NOT CONDITIONAL ON THE FOREGOING. WE FEEL COMMITTED TO PROVIDE SUPPORT. THE DESIRE OF OUR GOVERNMENT FROM THE PRESIDENT AND THE SECRETARY DOWN IS TO ASSIST ETHIOPIA. IN FACT, SOME AREAS OF

OUR MILITARY COOPERATION HAVE BEEN UNIQUE, SUCH AS THE SENDING OF M-60 TANKS AND THE UNUSUALLY ADVANTAGEOUS CREDIT TERMS FOR FMS IN FY-75. SUCH ACTIONS ARE PROOF OF US FRIENDSHIP AND SHOW THAT WE TAKE ETHIOPIA'S MILITARY PROBLEM SERIOUSLY.

6. SECRETARY DAVIS SAID HE WOULD WORK HARD IMMEDIATELY UPON HIS RETURN TO WASHINGTON TO OBTAIN A PRECISE DATE FOR THE DELIVERY OF F5AS

THAT THE DELIVERY OF TOW MISSILES CAN PROBABLY BE EFFECTED BEFORE THE END OF JULY, AND THAT HE WILL SEE WHAT CAN BE DONE ABOUT OTHER EQUIPMENT IN WHICH THE EPMG IS INTERESTED. HE ASSURED ATNAFU THAT HE UNDERSTOOD THE CONCERN OF THE EPMG AND THE URGENCY IT FELT.

7. ATNAFU SAID THAT THE MEETING HAD GIVEN HIM REASON TO HOPE FOR THE BEST AND THAT HE GREATLY APPRECIATED SECRETARY DAVIS' UNDERSTANDING OF HIS GOVERNMENT'S ASPIRATIONS AND HOPES. SECRETARY DAVIS SAID THAT HE AND AMBASSADOR HUMMEL WOULD BE TWO STRONG VOICES ON BOTH SIDES OF THE ATLANTIC IN SUPPORT OF ASSISTANCE TO ETHIOPIA. ATNAFU CONCLUDED BY REMARKING THAT HIS COUNTRY HAS PROFITED GREATLY FROM US COOPERATION IN THE PAST AND THE EPMG NOW LOOKS FORWARDED TO URGENT DECISIONS ON ITS OUTSTANDING REQUESTS.
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